A Writer's Job

A writer should be of as great probity and honesty as a priest of God. He is either honest or not, as a woman is chaste or not, and after one piece of dishonest writing he is never the same again.

A writer's job is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity to the truth should be so high that his invention, out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be. For facts can be observed badly; but when a good writer is creating something, he has time and scope to make it of an absolute truth. If during a war, conditions are such a writer cannot publish the truth because its publication would do harm to the state he should write and not publish. If he cannot make a living without publishing he can work at something else. But if he ever writes something which he knows in his inner self is not truth for no matter what patriotic motives, then he is finished. After the war people will have none of him because he, whose obligation is to tell the truth, has lied to them. And he will never be at peace with himself because he has deserted his complete obligation. — Ernest Hemingway in *Introduction to Men at War.*

Sun-Sto
8-30-64